Ref

OPINIONS AND DECLARATIONS RENDERED BY THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION ON ZOOLOGICAL NOMENCLATURE

Edited by

FRANCIS HEMMING, C.M.G., C.B.E. Secretary to the Commission

VOLUME 13. Part 10. Pp. 157-172

OPINION 409

Suppression under the Plenary Powers of seven specific names given by Gmelin (J.F.) in 1788 and 1789 to birds taken on Captain Cook's Last Expedition which were regarded as nomina dubia until 1950



LONDON:

Printed by Order of the International Trust for Zoological Nomenclature and

Sold on behalf of the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature by the International Trust at its Publications Office 41, Queen's Gate, London, S.W.7

1956

Price Ten Shillings and Sixpence

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INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION ON ZOOLOGICAL NOMENCLATURE

COMPOSITION AT THE TIME OF THE ADOPTION OF THE **RULING GIVEN IN OPINION 409**

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Mr. P. C. Sylvester-Bradley (Sheffield University, Sheffield, England) (12th

August 1953)

Dr. L. B. Holthuis (Rijksmuseum van Natuurlijke Historie, Leiden, The Netherlands) (12th August 1953)

OPINION 409

SUPPRESSION UNDER THE PLENARY POWERS OF SEVEN SPECIFIC NAMES GIVEN BY GMELIN (J.F.) IN 1788 AND 1789 TO BIRDS TAKEN ON CAPTAIN COOK'S LAST EXPEDITION WHICH WERE REGARDED AS "NOMINA DUBIA" UNTIL 1950

RULING.—(1) Under the Plenary Powers the undermentioned specific names are hereby suppressed for the purposes of the Law of Priority but not for those of the Law of Homonymy:—

- (a) eimeensis Gmelin (J.F.), [1789], as published in the combination Columba eimeensis;
- (b) unalaschkensis Gmelin (J.F.), [1789], as published in the combination *Hirundo unalaschkensis*;
- (c) septentrionalis Gmelin (J.F.), 1788, as published in the combination Lanius septentrionalis;
- (d) borealis Gmelin (J.F.), [1789], as published in the combination Motacilla borealis;
- (e) camtschatkensis Gmelin (J.F.), [1789], as published in the combination Motacilla camtschatkensis;
- (f) cirrhatus Gmelin (J.F.), [1789], as published in the combination *Pelecanus cirrhatus*;
- (g) australis Gmelin (J.F.), [1789], as published in the combination Sterna australis.

- (2) The under-mentioned specific names are hereby placed on the *Official List of Specific Names in Zoology* with the Name Nos. severally specified below:—
 - (a) *stairi* Gray (G.R.), [1856], as published in the combination *Caloenas* (*Phlegoenas*) *stairi* (Name No. 711);
 - (b) townsendi Oberholser, 1906, as published in the combination Collocalla francica townsendi (Name No. 712);
 - (c) natka Gmelin (J.F.), 1788, as published in the combination Lanius natka (Name No. 713);
 - (d) heinei Finsch & Hartlaub, [1870], as published in the combination Myolestes heinei (Name No. 714);
 - (e) sepium Horsfield, 1821, as published in the combination Orthotomos sepium (Name No. 715);
 - (f) albiventor Lesson, 1831, as published in the combination Carbo albiventor (Name No. 716);
 - (g) cerulea Bennett (F.D.), 1840, as published in the combination Sterna cerulea (Name No. 717).
- (3) The under-mentioned specific names are hereby placed on the *Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Specific Names in Zoology* with the Name Nos. 278 to 284 respectively:—the seven specific names specified in (1) above as there suppressed under the Plenary Powers.

I.—THE STATEMENT OF THE CASE

On 19th October 1950 Colonel Richard Meinertzhagen, Chairman of the Standing Committee on Ornithological Nomenclature established by the Tenth International Ornithological Congress, Uppsala, 1950, addressed to the Commission the following letter, with enclosure, containing an application prepared by the Standing Committee for the use by the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature of its Plenary Powers for the purpose of suppressing certain specific names given by Gmelin (J.F.) in 1788 and 1789 to birds taken on Captain Cook's Last Expedition, which had been regarded by ornithologists as nomina dubia until in 1850 in a paper published in the serial publication Auk Dr. Erwin Stresemann had established the identity of the species to which these names were applicable:—

Proposed use of the Plenary Powers to suppress seven trivial names published by Gmelin in 1788 and 1789 for birds which until 1950 remained unidentified

Application submitted by the Standing Committee on Ornithological Nomenclature of the International Ornithological Congress

Covering letter, dated 19th October, 1950, with enclosure, from Colonel R. Meinertzhagen, Chairman of the Standing Committee on Ornithological Nomenclature of the International Ornithological Congress

As Chairman of the Standing Committee on Ornithological Nomenclature, I beg to forward to you the following recommendations for favour of decision by the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature.

The recommendations now submitted relate to seven trivial names published by Gmelin in 1789 for birds taken on Captain Cook's Last Expedition. None of these names has been used by ornithologists, for the species so named have always been considered unrecognisable until in 1950 Dr. Erwin Stresemann, a member of the Standing Committee, established the identity of the species in question (Stresemann, Auk 67: 66—88). In the opinion of the majority of the members of the Committee it is desirable that all the seven names listed in the enclosure to the present letter should be suppressed by the International Commission, the corresponding names now in use for the species concerned being at the same time placed on the Official List

of Specific Trivial Names in Zoology. One member of the Standing Committee (Dr. John T. Zimmer), while concurring with the other members of the Committee as regards five of the seven names concerned, does not support the recommendation submitted in the two other names, namely the trivial name eimeensis Gmelin, [1789], as published in the combination Columba eimeensis, and the trivial name australis Gmelin, [1789], as published in the combination Sterna australis.

The action which the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is asked to take is that it should:—

- (1) use its Plenary Powers to suppress the under-mentioned trivial names for the purposes of the Law of Priority but not for those of the Law of Homonymy:—
 - (a) eimeensis Gmelin, [1789], as published in the combination Columba eimeensis;
 - (b) unalaschkensis Gmelin, [1789], as published in the combination Hirundo unalaschkensis;
 - (c) natka Gmelin, 1788, as published in the combination Lanius natka;
 - (d) septentrionalis Gmelin, 1788, as published in the combination Lanius septentrionalis;
 - (e) borealis Gmelin, [1789], as published in the combination Motacilla borealis;
 - (f) cirrhatus Gmelin, [1789], as published in the combination Pelecanus cirrhatus;
 - (g) australis Gmelin, [1789], as published in the combination Sterna australis;
- (2) place the under-mentioned trivial names on the Official List of Specific Trivial Names in Zoology:—
 - (a) stairi Gray (G.R.), [1856], as published in the combination Caloenas (Phlegoenas) stairi;
 - (b) townsendi Oberholser, 1906, as published in the combination Collocalla francica townsendi;
 - (c) pacificus Gmelin, [1789], as published in the combination Turdus pacificus;

- (d) heinei Finsch & Hartlaub, [1870], as published in the combination Myolestes heinei;
- (e) sepium Horsfield, 1821, as published in the combination Orthotomus sepium;
- (f) albiventer Lesson, 1831, as published in the combination Carbo albiventer;
- (g) cerulea Bennett (F.D.), 1840, as published in the combination Sterna cerulea;
- (3) place on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Specific Trivial Names in Zoology the seven trivial names specified in (1), as there proposed to be suppressed under the Plenary Powers.

ENCLOSURE

Seven trivial names published for birds by Gmelin in 1789 proposed to be suppressed under the Plenary Powers

1. The trivial name comprised in the specific name *Columba eimeensis* Gmelin, [1789], *in* Linnaeus, *Syst. Nat.* (ed. 13) **1**(2): 784.

It is recommended that the above name should be made a nomen rejectum and that the trivial name comprised in the name currently accepted for this species, namely Caloenas (Phlegoenas) stairi Gray (G.R.), [1856], Proc. zool. Soc. Lond. 24(301): 7 ("Samoa") be made a nomen conservandum. See Stresemann, 1950, Auk 67: 75.

2. The trivial name comprised in the specific name *Hirundo unalaschkensis* Gmelin, [1789], *in* Linnaeus, *Syst. Nat.* (ed. 13) **1**(2): 1025.

It is recommended that the above name should be made a nomen rejectum and that the subspecific trivial name comprised in the name currently accepted for this subspecies, namely Collocalla francica townsendi Oberholser, 1906, Proc. Acad. nat. Sci. Philad. 58: 181 ("Tonga Islands") be made a nomen conservandum. See Stresemann, 1950, Auk 67: 74.

3. The trivial name comprised in the specific name *Lanius natka* Gmelin, 1788, *in* Linnaeus, *ibid.* 1(1): 309.

It is recommended that the above name should be made a nomen rejectum and that the trivial name comprised in the

name currently accepted for this species, namely *Turdus pacificus* Gmelin, [1789], *in* Linnaeus, *ibid*. **1**(2): 813, be made a *nomen conservandum*. See Stresemann, 1950, *Auk* **67**: 73.

4. The trivial name comprised in the specific name Lanius septentrionalis Gmelin, 1788, in Linnaeus, ibid. 1(1): 306.

It is recommended that the above name should be made a nomen rejectum and that the trivial name comprised in the name currently accepted for this species, namely Myolestes heinei Finsch & Hartlaub, 1870, Proc. zool. Soc. Lond. 1869: 546 ("Tonga Islands"), be made a nomen conservandum. See Stresemann, 1950, Auk 67: 73—74.

5. The trivial names comprised in the specific names *Motacilla borealis* Gmelin, [1789], in Linnaeus, ibid. 1(2): 986, and *Motacilla camtschatkensis* Gmelin, [1789], in Linnaeus, ibid. 1(2): 986.

It is recommended that the above names (which apply to the same species) should be made *nomina rejecta* and that the trivial name comprised in the name currently accepted for this species, namely *Orthotomus sepium* Horsfield, 1821, *Trans. linn. Soc. Lond.* 13(1): 166 ("Java") be made a *nomen conservandum*. See Stresemann, 1950, *Auk* 67: 81—82.

6. The trivial name comprised in the specific name *Pelecanus cirrhatus* Gmelin, [1789], *in* Linnaeus, *ibid*. **1**(2): 576.

It is recommended that the above name should be made a nomen rejectum and that the trivial name comprised in the trivial name comprised in the name currently accepted for this species, namely Carbo albiventer Lesson, 1831, Traité Orn. (8): 604 ("Falkland Islands"), be made a nomen conservandum. See Stresemann, 1950, Auk. 67: 83.

7. The trivial name comprised in the specific name Sterna australis Gmelin, [1789], in Linnaeus, ibid. 1(2): 608.

It is recommended that the above name should be made a nomen rejectum and that the trivial name comprised in the name currently accepted for this species, namely Sterna cerulea Bennett (F.D.), 1840, Narr. Whaling Voy. 2: 248 ("Christmas Island") be made a nomen conservandum. See Stresemann, 1950, Auk 67: 78.

- R. MEINERTZHAGEN: Chairman of the Standing Committee.
- E. STRESEMANN: Zoologisches Museum der Universität, Berlin.

JOHN T. ZIMMER*: The American Museum of Natural History, New York.

(except items 1 and 7)

II.—THE SUBSEQUENT HISTORY OF THE CASE

- 2. Registration of the present application: Following the receipt of Colonel Meinertzhagen's letter the question of the use of the Plenary Powers to suppress certain specific names given by Gmelin to birds taken on Captain Cook's Last Expedition was allotted the Registered Number Z.N.(S.) 454.
- **3. Publication of the present application:** The present application was sent to the printer on 30th January 1952 and was published in Triple-Part 1/3 of volume 9 of the *Bulletin of Zoological Nomenclature* on 15th October of the same year (Meinertzhagen (Application by Standing Committee on Ornithological Nomenclature), 1952, *Bull. zool. Nomencl.* **9**: 40—43).
- 4. Issue of Public Notices: Under the revised procedure prescribed by the Thirteenth International Congress of Zoology, Paris, 1948 (1950, Bull. zool. Nomencl. 4:51—56), Public Notice of the possible use by the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature of its Plenary Powers in the present case was given on 15th October 1952 (a) in Triple-Part 1/3 of volume 9 of the Bulletin of Zoological Nomenclature (the Part in which the application by the Standing Committee on Ornithological Nomenclature was published), (b) to the other prescribed serial publications and (c) to certain general zoological serials. In addition, such Notice was given also to fourteen serial publications or institutions specially concerned with ornithology. The names of the serials and institutions in question have been given in the Opinion (Opinion 401)¹ relating to the generic name Colymbus Linnaeus, the Opinion in which the Commission dealt with the

^{*} Note by Dr. John T. Zimmer on Cases Nos. 1 and 7 (extract from a letter dated 3rd April 1951): The cases on which I differed from other members of the Standing Committee may be covered by a single statement. I did not feel that any serious confusion would result from the adoption of the newly discovered name. The change is perhaps unfortunate, as all such changes are, but is likely to cause no more than temporary inconvenience.

¹ Opinion 401 has been published as Part 1 of the present volume.

first of the series of applications submitted by the Standing Committee on Ornithological Nomenclature.

- 5. Comments of a general character: The issue of the Public Notices specified above elicited thirty-seven comments relating to the cases of ornithological nomenclature published in Triple-Part 1/3 of volume 9 of the Bulletin of Zoological Nomenclature. These comments came from ornithological institutions, groups of ornithologists and individual specialists. Of these comments, the authors of thirty-six gave general support to the applications published in the foregoing Triple-Part. The single remaining comment was from a specialist who was opposed to any use of the Commission's Plenary Powers. The communications so received have been reproduced in the Appendix annexed to Opinion 401 (Colymbus)², those supporting the applications referred to above being given in Part 1, the single comment in opposition to the above applications being given in Part 2 of that Appendix. Only one comment directly related to the present application was received. This comment, which was in support of the action proposed, is reproduced in the immediately following paragraph.
- 6. Particular support for the present application received from Dr. Josselyn Van Tyne (Ann Arbor, Michigan, U.S.A.) and five other United States ornithologists: On 18th March 1953 Dr. Josselyn Van Tyne (Ann. Arbor, Michigan, U.S.A.) and the five under-mentioned specialists addressed to the Commission a joint letter in support of the action proposed in the present case: (a) Robert W. Storer (Museum of Zoology, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan, U.S.A.); (b) Andrew J. Berger (Ann Arbor, Michigan, U.S.A.); (c) Olin Sewall Pettingill, Jr. (Northfield, Minnesota, U.S.A.); (d) Frank A. Pitelka (Berkeley, California, U.S.A.); (e) John Davis (Los Angeles, California, U.S.A.). The letter so received was as follows:—

We, the under-signed, wish to express our strong approval of proposal No. 5 (concerning natka (Lanius), etc.) published on page 33

² See Footnote 1 above.

The page reference here cited is to the page in Triple-Part 1/3 of volume 9 of the Bulletin of Zoological Nomenclature, where the present application appeared as proposal No. 5 in the Prescribed Plenary Powers Notice.

of vol. 9 of the *Bulletin of Zoological Nomenclature*. We hope that your Commission will take favourable action on it.

7. Amendment by the Standing Committee on Ornithological Nomenclature of its proposals relating to the specific name "natka" Gmelin, 1788, as published in the combination "Lanius natka": During the prescribed Waiting Period in the present case a letter (dated 8th January 1953) was received from Dr. Ernst Mayr (then of the American Museum of Natural History, New York) in which he questioned the advisability of the placing on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology of the specific name pacificus Gmelin, [1789], as published in the combination Turdus pacificus. This had been proposed in the application submitted in this case, the Standing Committee having taken the view that pacificus Gmelin would become the oldest available name for the taxon concerned if, as it was proposed, the specific name natka Gmelin, 1788, as published in the combination Lanius natka, were to be suppressed under the Plenary Powers. In raising this question in regard to the name pacificus Gmelin, Dr. Mayr wrote: "As far as I know, this name has been dropped for the last twenty-five years. In 1941 (Amer. Mus. Novit. No. 1116, p. 7) Ripley and I commented on this name as follows: 'Mathews (Syst. Av. Austr., 2, p. 548), in a footnote, has pointed out that Turdus pacificus Gmelin is not applicable to any Lalage. It is apparent from Gmelin's description (Syst. Nat. 1, pt. 2), 1789, p. 813) that his bird must have been much darker below and lacking any white on the lores, wings or rump. It is most likely that Gmelin's pacificus refers in reality to Clytorhynchus heinei (Finsch & Hartlaub), but as the type is no longer in existence, as inquiries at the British and Vienna Museums have revealed, the exact identity of pacificus can never be proved, and it seems best to discard this name as unidentifiable'. Stresemann in the *Auk* (1950, vol. 67, p. 73) reports that Mr. J. D. Macdonald of the British Museum found that the Lalage of the Tonga Islands agrees fairly well with Ellis' plate 18, which is the basis of Gmelin's name pacificus. It must be pointed out, however that Mr. Macdonald is a specialist on African birds and was not aware at the time of his comparison that the name Turdus pacificus might refer to *Clyptorhynchus*". In bringing Dr. Mayr's communication to the attention of Colonel Meinertzhagen, as Chairman of the Standing Committee, Mr. Hemming, as Secretary to the

Commission, expressed the view that the portion of the application relating to the foregoing names ought not to be proceeded with until the taxonomic ornithological issue raised by Dr. Mayr had been settled in one way or another. On 10th November 1953 Colonel Meinerzhagen replied that he had received the following reply from Dr. Stresemann, in whose paper in the Auk of 1950 the proposal submitted by the Standing Committee had its origin: "I am in complete accord with Hemming. Under the circumstances explained by Mayr in his comment on the name Turdus pacificus Gmelin, I am against the suppression of the name Lanius natka Gmelin, 1788. The name of the bird from the Tonga Islands in question would therefore henceforth stand as Lalage natka natka (Gmelin), antedating Lalage maculosa tabuensis Mayr & Ripley, 1941. I have inspected Ellis' plate 18 and can confirm Macdonald's statement that it represents the female of the Lalage from Tonga, whilst the name Lanius natka was based on a male from the same place." In forwarding the above communication from Professor Stresemann, Colonel Meinertzhagen, as Chairman of the Standing Committee, asked on its behalf (a) that the proposal for the suppression of the name natka Gmelin be treated as having been withdrawn, (b) that the foregoing specific name be placed on the Official List, and (c) that the proposal submitted in regard to the specific name pacificus Gmelin be treated as having been withdrawn. Particulars of these modifications in the present application were reported in a Note (Note 5) to the Commission at the time when it was asked to vote on the present case.

III.—THE DECISION TAKEN BY THE INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION ON ZOOLOGICAL NOMENCLATURE

8. Issue of Voting Paper V.P.(54)66: On 14th May 1954, a Voting Paper (V.P.(54)66) was issued in which the Members of the Commission were invited to vote either for, or against,

"the proposal relating to seven specific names for birds published by Gmelin in 1788 and 1789, as specified in Points (1) to (3) on page 41 of volume 9 of the Bulletin of Zoological Nomenclature [i.e. in the Points numbered as above in the last paragraph of the letter from Colonel Meinertzhagen reproduced in the first paragraph of the present Opinion], subject to the modifications specified in the accompanying Note 5 by the Secretary." The substance of the Note here referred to has been given in paragraph 7 of the present Opinion. The actual modifications in the original proposal so involved were (i) the withdrawal of the recommendation in Point (1)(c) (proposed suppression under the Plenary Powers of the specific name natka Gmelin, 1788, as published in the combination Lanius natka) and (ii) the substitution for the recommendation in Point (2)(c) (proposed addition of the specific name pacificus Gmelin, [1789], as published in the combination Turdus pacificus, to the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology) of a recommendation for the addition of the specific name natka Gmelin, 1788, as published in the combination Lanius natka, to the foregoing Official List.

- **9.** The Prescribed Voting Period: As the foregoing Voting Paper was issued under the Three-Month Rule, the Prescribed Voting Period closed on 14th August 1954.
- 10. Particulars of the Voting on Voting Paper V.P.(54)66: At the close of the Prescribed Voting Period, the state of the voting Paper V.P.(54)66 was as follows:—
 - (a) Affirmative Votes had been given by the following nineteen (19) Commissioners (arranged in the order in which Votes were received):

Boschma; Holthuis; Lemche; Dymond; Hering; Vokes; Esaki; Riley; Bonnet; Bradley (J.C.); Hemming; do Amaral; Pearson; Hankó; Mertens; Sylvester-Bradley; Cabrera; Stoll; Jaczewski;

(b) Negative Votes:

None:

(c) Voting Papers not returned:

None.

- 11. Declaration of Result of Vote: On 17th August 1954, Mr. Hemming, Secretary to the International Commission, acting as Returning Officer for the Vote taken on Voting Paper V.P.(54)66, signed a Certificate that the Votes cast were as set out in paragraph 10 above and declaring that the proposal submitted in the foregoing Voting Paper had been duly adopted and that the decision so taken was the decision of the International Commission in the matter aforesaid.
- 12. Preparation of the Ruling given in the present "Opinion": On 11th October 1955 Mr. Hemming prepared the Ruling given in the present *Opinion* and at the same time signed a Certificate that the terms of that Ruling were in complete accord with those of the proposal approved by the International Commission in its Vote on Voting Paper V.P.(54)66.
- 13. Original References: The following are the original references for the names placed on *Official Lists* and *Official Indexes* by the Ruling given in the present *Opinion*:—

albiventor, Carbo, Lesson, 1831, Traité Orn. (8): 604

australis, Sterna, Gmelin (J.F.), [1789], in Linnaeus, Syst. Nat. (ed. 13) 1(2): 608

borealis, Motacilla, Gmelin (J.F.), [1789] in Linnaeus, Syst. Nat. (ed. 13) 1(2): 686

camtschatkensis, Motacilla, Gmelin (J.F.), [1789], in Linnaeus, Syst. Nat. 1(2): 986

cerulea, Sterna, Bennett (F.D.), 1840, Narr. Whaling Voy. 2:248

- cirrhatus, Pelecanus, Gmelin (J.F.), [1789], in Linnaeus, Syst. Nat. (ed. 13) 1(2): 576
- eimeensis, Columba, Gmelin (J.F.), [1789), in Linnaeus, Syst. Nat. (ed. 13) 1(2): 784
- heinei, Myolestes, Finsch & Hartlaub, [1870], Proc. zool. Soc. Lond. 1869: 546
- natka, Lanius, Gmelin (J.F.), 1788, in Linnaeus, Syst. Nat. (ed. 13) 1(1): 309
- sepium, Orthotomos, Horsfield, 1821, Trans. linn. Soc. Lond. 13(1): 166
- septentrionalis, Lanius, Gmelin (J.F.), 1788, in Linnaeus, Syst. Nat. (ed. 13) 1(1): 306
- stairi, Caloenas (Phlegoenas), Gray (G.R.), [1856], Proc. zool. Soc. Lond. 24(301): 7
- townsendi, Collocalla francica, Oberholser, 1906, Proc. Acad. nat. Sci. Philad. 58: 181
- unalaschkensis, Hirundo, Gmelin (J.F.), [1789], in Linnaeus, Syst. Nat. (ed. 3)1(2): 1025
- 14. At the time of the submission of the present application the name applicable to the second portion of a binomen was "trivial name". This was altered to "specific name" by the Fourteenth International Congress of Zoology, Copenhagen, 1953, which at the same time made corresponding changes in the titles of the Official List and Official Index of names of this category. These changes in terminology have been incorporated in the ruling given in the present Opinion.
- 15. The prescribed procedures were duly complied with by the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature in dealing with the present case, and the present *Opinion* is accordingly hereby rendered in the name of the said International Commission by the under-signed Francis Hemming, Secretary to the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature, in virtue of all and every the powers conferred upon him in that behalf.

16. The present *Opinion* shall be known as *Opinion* Four Hundred and Nine (409) of the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature.

DONE in London, this Eleventh day of October, Nineteen Hundred and Fifty-Five.

Secretary to the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature

FRANCIS HEMMING